

Moai Sightings

MUST BE SOMETHING IN THE WATER! *Moai* have been appearing in magazines, advertisements, and cartoons with astonishing regularity. Many of the cartoons deal with the connection between Easter and Easter Island, thus we are treated to statues and Easter bunnies, statues and Easter eggs, etc. There was even an Easter Island "Easter Buffet" advertised in the *New York Times* "Dining" section (for a restaurant in New Jersey). It shows three statues and an ad for a grand Easter buffet that included a menu that would delight the heart of any Rapanui islander: smoked fish, sirloin, roast pork, roast lamb, baked fish and chicken.



This large *moai* with Neanderthal-like brow ridges was spotted at Smith Botanical Gardens, Wailua, Kaua'i. Photo by K. T. Hunter.

What's New at the Kon-Tiki Museum

OSLO

A NO BARRIERS SEMINAR, dedicated to Dr Christopher Stevenson Director of Obsidian Dating Laboratory, Archaeological Services Consultants, Columbus Ohio; and Sonia Haoa, Archaeologist and Director of Fundación Isla de Pascua, Easter Island, was held at the Kon-Tiki Museum on 28 April. A grant was awarded to Stevenson who received it from the hands of Thor Heyerdahl. Following the ceremony, a No Barriers Seminar, named titled "Archaeology, Agriculture and Identity" was held. The following papers were presented:

"Diminishing Agricultural Production and the Collapse of Easter Island Ranked Society" by Dr. Christopher Stevenson and Sonia Haoa;

"Paleobotanical Investigations as a Foundation for the Creation of an Archaeobotanical Garden on Easter Island" by Sonia Haoa;

"The Importance of Cross-disciplinary Collaboration in Re-construction of the Human Past. With focus on Ethnobotany" by Dr. Thor Heyerdahl, The Kon-Tiki Museum.

"Taro Irrigation, Arboriculture and Stratified Politics in the 'Melanesian Heartland': Evidence from Precolonial New Georgia" by Dr. Edvard Hviding, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, Norway;

"The Sweet Potato in Pacific Context. Sweet and Soft, but Still a 'Hard Fact' by Dr. Paul Wallin, The Kon-Tiki Museum, Institute for Pacific Archaeology and Cultural History, Oslo, Norway;

"Cultivating an Identity. Horticulture and Social Space in the Hanatekua Valley, Hiva Oa, Marquesas Islands" by Reidar Solsvik, Department of Archaeology, University of Bergen, Norway; and

"Roots of Precedence. Yam Cultivation and Leadership in Pre-Christian Tonga" by Dr. Arne Aleksej Perminow, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Trondheim, Norway.

The Seminar Leader was Dr. Helene Martinsson-Wallin, Curator, The Kon-Tiki Museum. Institute for Pacific Archaeology and Cultural History, Oslo, Norway. The Seminar was conducted in collaboration with the main sponsor Telenor, The Norwegian Telecommunication Company.

What's New in the USA

AN EXHIBIT ABOUT EASTER ISLAND was held in New York at the American Museum of Natural History from 3-16 May, 1999. Titled *Easter Island: Legacies of a People, Masters of Stone*, it was held in conjunction with the Consulate of Chile in New York, ProChile, the Chilean Trade Commission, the Office of the Mayor of Easter Island, and the Chilean Cultural Foundation. This exposition was to show US businessmen alternatives for tourist investment.

A demonstration of *moai* carving was scheduled on the first floor of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Hall where four artists from the island, Pedro Pakarati Araki, Pablo Hereveri Teao, Bene Aukara Tuki, and Esteban Pakarati carved a 9 foot *moai* from volcanic rock shipped to New York from the island. A dance group, Riu Hoko Rapa Nui, performed with chants and dances, and *kaikai*. The same group held a dance and music workshop on one weekend, and one lecture demonstrated how artists carve small figures of stone. This was followed by a demonstration of body painting. A lecture series completed the programs, and included John Loret discussing Heyerdahl's work, John Tanacredi discussing the preservation strategies of the national park; Sergio Rapu lectured on archaeology and ecology, and E. Blain Cliver discussed the use of photogrammetry to record the rock art at 'Orongo

THE MOAI DE LA PAZ is on its way to Epcot Center in Orlando, Florida, where it will be on display for a millennium celebration. This *moai*, sculpted in 1990 by a group of young islanders, has been to Tahiti, New Caledonia, Paris, and Lisbon.

What's New in Polynesia

THE BIG ISLAND VOYAGING CANOE *Makali'i* sailed from Chuuk Lagoon to Satawal on its most important leg of its Micronesian voyage. Satawal is the home of the great Polynesian navigator Mau Pailug who taught Hawaiians the ancient skill of celestial navigation 25 years ago, and who was instrumental in the revival of celestial navigation among Polynesian peoples. Pailug was asked by anthropologist Ben Finney to navigate the *Hökule'a*, the first voyaging canoe built in Hawai'i. Pailug re-

ceived an honorary doctorate from the University of Hawai'i in recognition of his help in preserving traditional knowledge. Nainoa Thompson studied under Pailug, and is now the navigator of the *Hōkule'a*.

Herb Kane, Hawaiian historian and artist, stated that the canoe "...lies at the heart of the cultural web. It exemplifies the qualities that our ancestors had, qualities of resourcefulness, intelligence and courage. In a very quiet way it reminds us that we must emulate those qualities today." For the last voyage of this millennium, the *Hōkule'a* will sail to Rapa Nui, thus completing its Polynesian journeys.

Honolulu Star Bulletin, 19 April 1999

RESEARCH BY AUSTRALIA'S Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) shows that rising emissions from industry and vehicles will result in a 5-12 cm sea-level rise that will peak around 2020-2025. Hundreds of small islands and their biodiversity will be at risk in coming years. The report noted an urgent need for action, stating that small islands are in the front line, and the longer the delay in curtailing emissions, the greater the risk.

Bulletin of the University of the South Pacific, Vol. 32(5) 1999

NEWS OF THE WEIRD DEPARTMENT: Another intrepid sailor is at it. Kenichi Horie of Osaka, Japan, is headed toward Honolulu from San Francisco and then on to Japan in a sailboat made from beer barrels. The 60 year old adventurer is sailing alone and his progress can be tracked on <<http://www.malts-mermaid.com/>>

Honolulu Star-Bulletin, 2 April, 1999

AS FOR THE MATARANGI #2, Kitin Muñoz' second attempt to sail a reed boat across the Pacific, it reached the Marquesas from Arica after 3 months, but just barely. Half of the boat had to be cut away due to deterioration of the reeds. At least, on this trip, the boat didn't sink at sea (see *RNJ* 11(2):96).

TAHITI

DESPITE THE END OF NUCLEAR TESTING on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls in 1996, Moruroa remains a protected zone for national defense, meaning that French Foreign Legionnaires have the right to use firearms to protect the test facility. Fangataufa is only under ordinary law so French troops do not have the right to shoot intruders. Journalists visiting the atoll recently were told that the major threat is geo-mechanical: a part of the atoll is subsiding. They were fed with imported food and water from France. According to local military, no one touches the fish, nor even a single coconut. The French State was supposed to return Moruroa and Fangataufa to territorial government control after the testing ceased, but no one in Tahiti is in a hurry to reclaim these islands.

Pacific News Bulletin 14(3), 1999

HAWAI'I

THE HŌKULE'A was put into dry dock early this spring to prepare for the long sea voyage to Easter Island. She was carefully checked for any defects that could cause a problem, and several miles of lashings were replaced. The entire canoe is lashed to-

gether—no nails, bolts or screws. This replica of a Polynesian sailing canoe will depart Hawai'i in June and sail for Easter Island. The precise time of arrival is not known as much depends upon the weather and the ability of the navigator to find tiny Rapa Nui. The *Hōkule'a* will also sail to the Marquesas, Tuamotus, and Tahiti before returning to Hawai'i.

What's New in Hangaroa

THE OFFICES OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT of Easter Island were occupied on 26 March by members of the Consejo de Ancianos #2 in protest against an election organized by CONADI (National Commission of Indigenous Development). About 20 protestors occupied the offices, and erected Rapanui flags and signs with slogans opposing the central government. Police posted themselves outside the entrance to prevent further disorder. Governor Hey was away on vacation at the time.

The president of the Consejo de Ancianos #2, Mario Tuki, said that the purpose of the occupation was to demand a more democratic election for president of the Consejo de Ancianos, set for April 25. Protestors argued that the election should be by secret vote. Of special concern was the "traditional survey" that permits a Rapanui to express opinions about the President of the Consejo de Ancianos in a special book when registering for the election.

On April 1st, ten protestors burned the electoral registry in the offices of CONADI in which were the names of 407 Rapanui over the age of 18 (out of a possible total of 800). According to CONADI, the lost names were re-inscribed quickly so the electoral process could continue as scheduled. Five Rapanui became a part of CONADI, permitting their participation in the administration of the island. CONADI denounced the vandalism before the tribunals of justice, but there were no arrests.

Since the disturbances and the fire, opinions about the President of the Consejo were kept in a sealed envelope. The island community remained calm following the incidents, waiting for the vote that could be historic for the solution of internal conflicts surrounding the two Consejo de Ancianos groups, and that has gone on for more than five years.

On April 7, Alberto Hotus Chavez was ratified as president of the Consejo de Ancianos Rapanui. He received 407 votes from the native community, more than the president of the dissident faction, Matias Riroroko, who received 332 votes. In a climate of great tension, the representatives of those two candidates presented the vote count in the salon of the Municipalidad of Isla de Pascua before the presence of an attorney from CONADI and other functionaries on the Island.

And so doubts were removed about who will be the President of the Consejo de Ancianos, serving on the "Development Commission of Isla de Pascua." Created especially for the Island by the *Ley Indígena*, the Commission will be a unit of the Island Assembly (as exists on other Polynesian islands) enabling Islanders to participate in making important decisions on the island.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 6 April 1999

The Commission of Development, CONADI, was created by the *Ley Indígena*, and has 14 members: The Provincial Governor; the Mayor; representatives of State Institutions (6); and

representatives of the Rapanui ethnic group, one of which is the president of the Consejo de Ancianos. The Commission will be significant for issues of land development and programs of economic, social and cultural development. It will collaborate with CONAF to administer the Rapa Nui National Park and with the National Council of Monuments in matters of archaeology. The environment will be another consideration.

As we go to press, word was received from *Gazette Te Rapa Nui* that the five Rapanui who were elected to the "Insular Assembly" are Marcelo Ika Pont, Jorge Pont Chavez, Alfredo Tuki Pate, Carlos Roe Pakarati, and Carlos Edmunds Paoa. The surprise was the defeat of Matias Riroroko, who lost by one vote.

FOR THOSE WHO MAY HAVE JUST TUNED IN, there is considerable confusion concerning the local political scene on Rapa Nui. A dissident group, known as the Consejo de Ancianos #2 is in opposition to the original Consejo de Ancianos #1. For more than 5 years, the Consejo de Ancianos #2 has been alleging to be the real representatives of the island, rejecting the leadership of Alberto Hotus Chavez, who is the current president of the Consejo de Ancianos #1. Hotus commented that, "...if there is someone who has not fulfilled their word, it is the dissident group ... They even signed an agreement with the government". He added "...the Chilean government cannot interfere with the Consejo de Ancianos, as it is a right established in the 1888 Sovereignty Grant Document. We have accepted, nevertheless, a special book in which the Rapanui people could give their opinion of whom they want for president of the Consejo de Ancianos. Some 300 islanders have freely written their opinion on that special book, in the traditional way--not secretly--when they register to vote in the election.

Last September, only hours before the Government delivered the first 250 farms of 5 hectares each to 500 islander families, the Consejo de Ancianos #2 sanctioned an agreement with the National Properties Minister to stop the land distribution in spite of the anger from the beneficiaries. Future land distribution will be done by the Development Commission. The dissidents agreed to stop promoting illegal land occupation, and removed a tent and offensive posters against the State of Chile which have stood all these years beside Hanga Roa's parish church. The Consejo de Ancianos #2 is headed by Mario Tuki Hey; Raul Teao Hey; the brothers José Abimareka and Matías Riroroko Pakomio; Benito Rapahango; Juan Chavez Haoa; José Tuki Pate, and Terai Huke Atan.

Gazette Te Rapa Nui & El Mercurio, 28 March 1999

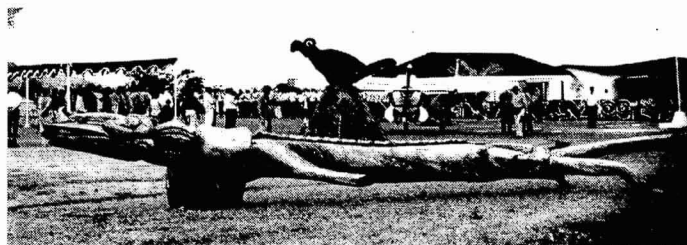
MAYOR PEDRO EDMUNDS PAOA complained that the Chilean Navy cannot use its ships and boats to carry cargo to the inhabitants of Easter Island. In the past, they lent much assistance to the Island, but today they use ships only to provide supplies for their own base on the island and to rotate their own personnel. Edmunds explained that a legal disposition prohibits them from carrying cargo to the island. However, as he pointed out, the Chilean Air Force (FACH) has no legal limitations for providing help. He made these declarations in the Armed Forces building, after thanking the FACH for its support in the past, and adding: "... we identify ourselves with FACH because they are always helping the community, and it pains us to read criticism of that

institution in the press. We back the Chilean Air Force and especially its Commander-in-Chief." Edmunds emphasized his hopes that FACH will continue with their noble work on the island. Air Force Commander, General Fernando Rojas, announced that a medical team will come to the island in April to attend islanders in need of treatment. At the end of March, palm trees from Tahiti will be brought to the island to replace those in bad condition. General Rojas said that he hopes to continue the aid to the Islanders because "...the island is a very important strategic point for the next millennium."

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 8 April 1999

NAME CHANGES IN RAPA NUI. An increase in applications to change last names from Rapanui to Chilean has been noted on the island in recent times, and has caused unrest in the Rapanui community which wants to preserve its ethnic patrimony. Since 1994, 35 applications have been received. According to the attorney of CONADI on the island, David Barrientos, 80% of the applications have been approved and this has upset several island families because the heads of the household have transposed the Rapanui last name to a second place. Such changes are permitted by Art. 71 of the *Ley Indígena*.

THE POPULATION OF HORSES has expanded tremendously despite the island's lack of fodder and water, with the result that horses are everywhere. But the horse population is in big trouble. They are dying of intestinal parasites from drinking contaminated water and, as the medicine that cures this problem is too expensive for most horse owners, the problem goes untreated. Horses also are dying from the effects of ingesting a recently imported plant (said to be similar to lupine) that causes illness if the horse doesn't get enough water to drink. There simply are too many animals (horses and cattle) for the available grazing area, and a lack of water is a perennial problem. We hear that a veterinarian from the University of California at Davis was recently on the island, studying the problem.



A very large wood carving, used in one of the Tapati parades a few years ago, is now on display in front of the airport. This giant lizard (*moko*) is a standout. Behind it a large bird carved from red scoria by local artists, and behind that, the new sea and air rescue airplane.

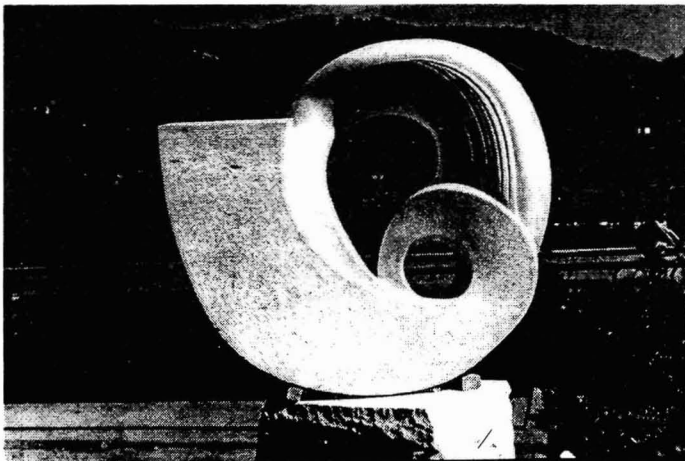
A HUGE STONE AND CONCRETE *REIMIRO* has been set up as a display in front of the office of the governor. This art piece was part of the Tapati parade, which this year featured several very large items that were commissioned by individuals; one is a replica of Ahu Nau Nau, paid for by the Hotel Hotu Matu'a. The Tapati parade was the best ever, according to those who saw it.

BECAUSE IT LACKS TECHNICAL PEOPLE, Rapa Nui is excluded from Government Cultural Funds and priority is given to other items on the island. Since the National Fund of Regional Development (FNDR) instigated its "cultural funds" in 1997, Easter Island has not been considered because the island does not have specialized personnel to run projects of that nature. According to the chief of the Division of Analysis and Control of the Regional Government, Alberto Muñoz, the need to create other projects such as sewers, energy, and paved roads has pushed cultural projects aside. Moreover, islanders do not have professional experts available to carry out such programs because the municipality does not have its own funds.

Muñoz did note that some cultural projects have been funded from the continent for artistic creations such as the Artisan's Market. This year the islanders received funds for the traditional fiesta of Tapati Rapa Nui, albeit from another source because "unfortunately, there was no time to develop projects rapidly enough", he emphasized.

The FNDR has had administrative problems elsewhere because less than 50% of the projects presented in 1998 were executed in that year. Island Governor Jacobo Hey backed the statements of Muñoz saying, "...island personnel are not technically prepared nor do they have sufficient experience to carry out such projects."

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 10 March 1999



Paroko te Mana by Bene Aukara Tuki

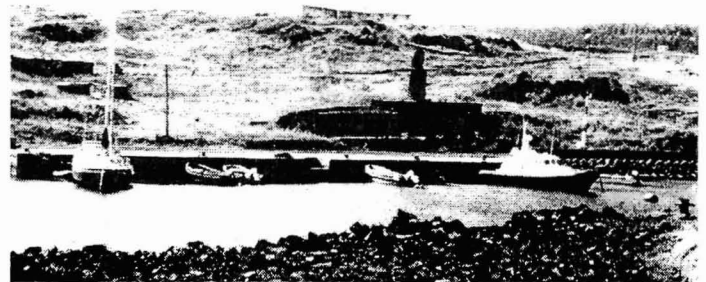
BENE AUKARA TUKI, a renowned artist from Easter Island, participated in the *Internacional Simposio de Esculturas* from November 23 to December 6, 1998 on mainland Chile. Six Chilean sculptors competed and, among those, Bene represented Rapa Nui. There also were artists from Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, England, Spain and Latvia. The *Simposio* was organized by the Galeria de Arte Artespacio in Santiago de Chile. Bene's piece is a magnificent carving, named "*Paroko te Mana*", in travertine marble. In February of 1999, Bene participated in a Winter Festival in Ottawa, Canada. As part of a delegation of six Chilean artists, Bene carved three *moai* and a whale from blocks of ice, each three meters high. In May 1999, Bene participated in an exhibit in New York City at the American Museum of Natural History (see What's New in the USA).

CONAF (National Parks of Chile) has produced a nice brochure for visitors (in Spanish) about the site at Rano Raraku. Numbered statues at the quarry have correlating descriptions in the brochure, along with a plea for conservation. It is available from CONAF on the island for approximately \$5. The brochure may be produced in English in the future.

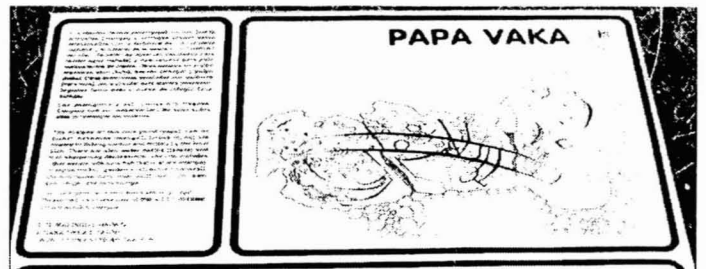
CONAF, together with the Camara de Turismo, the Municipalidad, the Sebastian Englert Museum, the Museo Nacional Historia Natural and the Museo Sociedad Fonck jointly produced a handsome map of the island in color; this is to be available at the CONAF office, 'Orongo, and probably at local stores as well. Estimated cost: \$10. Twenty percent of sales will go toward island conservation projects.



The Kona Koa restaurant in the village has a display of wild-eyed local carvings set up to greet visitors to the establishment. The restaurant specializes in local and French cuisine and provides entertainment twice a week.



The newly erected statue at Hanga Piko gazes up at the Chilean Marine barracks. The small harbor at Hanga Piko can be seen in the foreground. The statue was found lying in a pile of rubble, the original *ahu* stones had been carried off years ago, making this a modern-built *ahu*, not a restoration.



The National Parks of Chile (CONAF) has placed signs at some of the more frequently-visited sites. This one is at Papa Vaka, the large petroglyph site at Ahu Ra'ai. The sign includes a drawing of the carved motifs. Information is provided in Spanish, English and Rapanui.



The façade of the island church was decorated at Christmas time with two large and colorful murals depicting a nativity scene with Rapanui overtones.



One of the Chilean wine palms recently brought to the island. It's height can be estimated by comparison with the woman standing to the left of the tree. It is hoped that the palm will become part of a projected botanical garden on the island.

THIEVES ABOUND. A break-in at the Sebastian Englert Museum on Easter Island resulted in the theft of several ancient artifacts, including an eye from a statue that was found during excavations at Tongariki. The culprit was quickly arrested and most of the artifacts recovered.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso

Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor:

Rapa Nui Journal (Vol.13:14-15) March 1999 contains an article by the hobby epigrapher Sergei V. Rjabchikov that purports to "translate" a *rongorongo* tablet from Easter Island.

In this article, the author never discloses the fact that the artifact under investigation, which he calls the "Chicago Fish Tablet", is in fact a tourist reproduction from 1925.

The artifact in question is the "Fuller *ika*" (RR 1), inventory number 273245 at the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, USA. Showing three parallel lines of some 30 glyphs in a mixture of primitive *rongorongo*, *ta'u*, and *mama* figures, it was manufactured on Rapanui in 1925 at which time Captain Alfred Walter Francis Fuller (1882-1961) brought it to London. At no time has the Field Museum ever claimed that this artifact is of ancient provenance. Its value lies in its representation of the carving genre used on Rapa Nui in the 1920s. It is a typical product of this era. Several similar "*ika*'s" were adorning Tahitian collections in the 1920s.

Having been manufactured in 1925 and including a pseudo-"script", the *mama*, that was only elaborated in the 1920s, the "Fuller *ika*" does not hold a text but merely decoration, added to the artifact in order to command a greater selling price. Decoration does not need "translating".

It is most strange that Mr. Rjabchikov does not inform the readers of the *Rapa Nui Journal* of the recent manufacture of this artifact. The only explanation can be that he himself is not aware of it or that he simply chooses to ignore this fact in order to publicize an imaginative "translation". Mr. Rjabchikov's article is neither adequate scholarship nor passable journalism. It is deception.

Steven Roger Fischer, Ph.D. Director,
Institute of Polynesian Languages and Literatures, NZ

Reviews

José Miguel Ramírez A. Patrimonio Cultural y Comunidad en Rapa Nui (Cultural Heritage and the Community in Rapa Nui) In: *Patrimonio Arqueológico Indígena en Chile. Reflexiones y Propuestas de Gestión*. Ximena Navarro Harris and Leonor Adán Alfaro, Eds., Instituto de Estudios Indígenas, Universidad de la Frontera and UNESCO, Santiago, Chile 1998, pp. 125-131, ISBN. 956-236-114-4

Review by A. Elena Charola, Ph.D.

Consultant, World Monuments Fund, Easter Island Program

The book, devoted to the indigenous archeological heritage of Chile, is divided into three sections: Archaeological Heritage, Institutions and Legal Measures; Defense of the Heritage; and Proposals and Initiatives for Management. Within this